Solon. Abell
1848.

Middlebury Vt. June 8th 1848

Dear Brother;

Your letter was gratefully recieved, and I seize this occasion to return you a few lines, It seems then you have had the good fortune to return to Meriden to spend the summer. This without doubt is pleasant for you, and I hope it will also be profitable. You are enjoying advantages in study which were not granted to myself when at your age, although I would not be suspected of indulging envious feelings at all, — far from it. I earnestly desire that you should have an education when and where it will be most for your good, and consist with the circumstances in which we are all placed. Having often talked with you upon the subject, I suppose that no advice which I can offer now will influence you in the least, Yet I cannot believe that you will eventually recieve any greater benefit by pushing your college scheme with so much haste. You speak of entering college next year. This I would not do, were I in your place, had I all the necessary funds immediately at my command. So hasty a preparation will not carry you along in your subsequent course with as much safety as you imagine. You might possibly get fitted so as to stand respectably in your class: and be able to sail smoothly when the wind is fair, but you will not be sufficiently girded to ride safely through the storms which may assail you before you become a graduate. It is

well for the ~~the~~ student to look ahead, and keep clear of the shoals lest he may come upon them unawares. No man was ever made a scholar in a day. But it is the result of long and continued application. It is true, a person, by overtasking himself, may work his way across an extensive field in a short time, and imagine that he has exhausted it of its contents. But this is not the main object of education. Its utility consists in the strength and vigor which it imparts to the mind; and although you may store your mind with all the facts necessary for gaining an admission to college, in one year, yet by this means you cannot acquire that discipline, which a longer period would afford. My own experience and observation convinces me of this fact. Perhaps some would call my own fitting but a partial one, and I feel the effects of my hasty studying to some extent. But rather than enter college with the preparation which I have known some to have, I would prefer not to enter at all. College is no place to learn what should be learned at the academy, and he who neglects the first part of his course, will always feel the void which it occasions. Remember that you are now young, and should you not enter college for 4 years, you would then be no older than I was at my entrance. And I warrant you, you would make as great a man in that case as the other. I do not regret my age. — I only regret that I was not better fitted. Besides I know not how father can assist us all at once so much. What he helps Sumner this summer will take, I think nearly all the money he has at his command. It is an enorm-

sum I assure you,—so much that I dare not call for a cent more than I can in any way help, depriving myself of clothes and many other things which I need. For rather than have father ~~for~~ mortgage the little estate which he now possesses I would withdraw from college, Indeed I should consider it my duty to do so. We ought not to draw from him his last cent, when the prospect of repaying it is involved in uncertainty. I write this, merely as expressing the feelings which the reading of your letter occasioned in my mind. But from the manner in which you have heretofore recieved my advice, I hardly anticipate that it will be heeded.

My health is tolerably good this term, and I am getting along very well in study. Five weeks of the term are now past, and at the end of ~~seven more~~ commencement takes place, Great times are expected then. The societies are to be addressed by Dr Baird and Prof Owen of N.Y.; and the Troy city band are to discourse the music on the occasion. There are only 10 seniors to graduate, and they intend to make parade enough to make up for the paucity of their number, I conclude.

Summer will soon be through with his collegiate studies, and out upon the world of business. He does not yet know where he shall be in the fall, but I presume he will not want for employment.

You wrote that you intend uniting with the church in Langdon, and wish me to do the same. I rejoice that this is your intention; but as regards myself, I hardly know what answer to make. I can hardly believe that I am fully prepared for such a step,

and oftentimes fear that, should I do so, I might be guilty of professing myself to be what I am not. Many times since I left you in the Spring, I have almost been driven to the conclusion that I am not a christian. I feel that I have within me but little evidence of that change of heart which is necessary to a true conversion. If then must necessarily be a sudden transition from sin to holiness, attended by the most pungent remorse, and followed by a perfect composure, then I can point to no time since I have dared to hope that I am a christian, when this change has been effectually wrought upon me. Still I feel that I love the Savior, and love the duties of religion, to some extent, though not as I ought. I have this afternoon been reading the biography of Rev. Levi Parsons (who with his friend and classmate Rev. Pliny Fisk was the first protestant missionary to Jerusalem) who graduated at this college in 1814; And while reading of his manner of life while a student here, and of ~~occupant~~ dweller in these same retreats which we students now occupy, O how did I wish that my life might be as blameless as was the life of that holy man! In years that are past this college has sent out many great and good men. Formerly, scarcely a year passed without a religous revival. O how sadly changed! Would that the Lord might again revive his work in this institution, and that such men might again go forth from here, as Parsons, Fisk, Warren and Anderus!

Sumner had a letter from home a few days ago; Our friends at Sengdon were all well.

Your affectonate brother Solon.